

Mercury contamination and birds

Update: April 2005

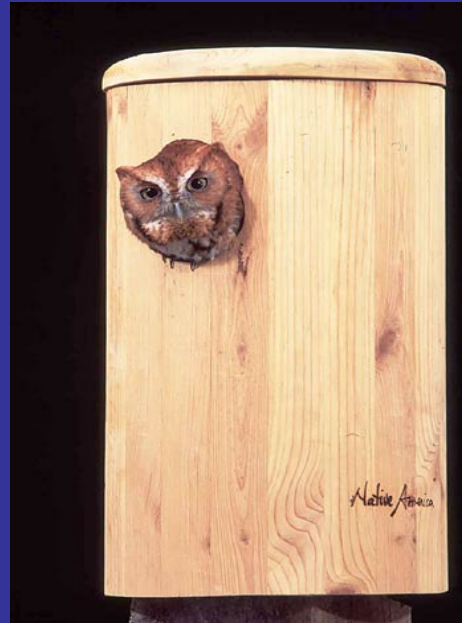
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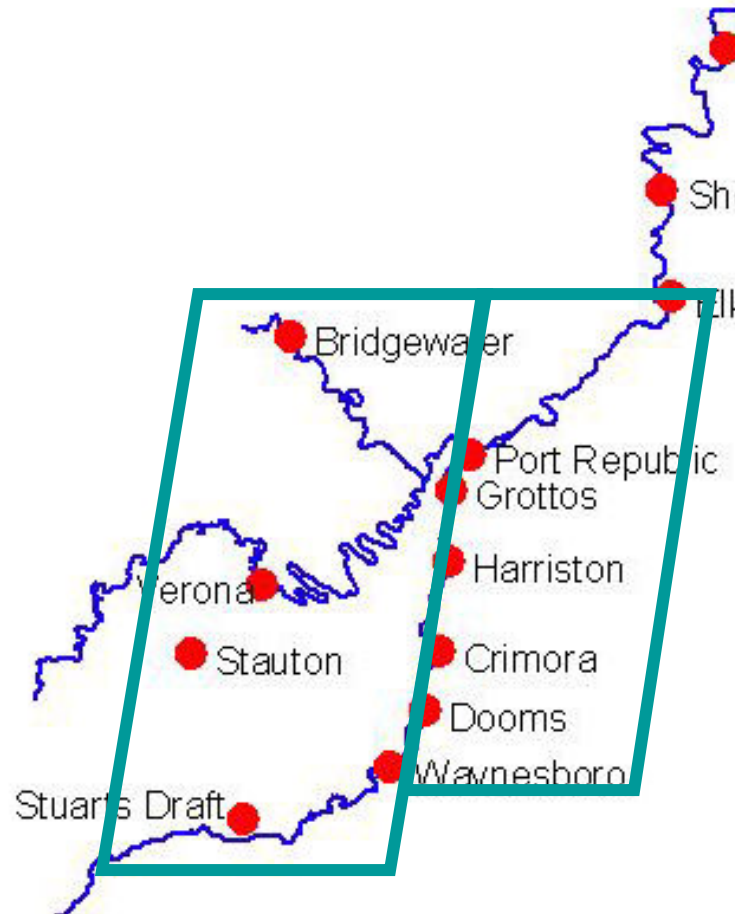




Objectives:

- Compare reproductive success and health of birds in contaminated and less contaminated areas
- Determine level of mercury in feathers and blood
- Generate baseline diversity data

300 nest boxes
divided across
contaminated
and reference
area

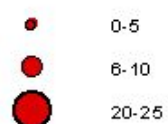


Distribution of tree swallow boxes

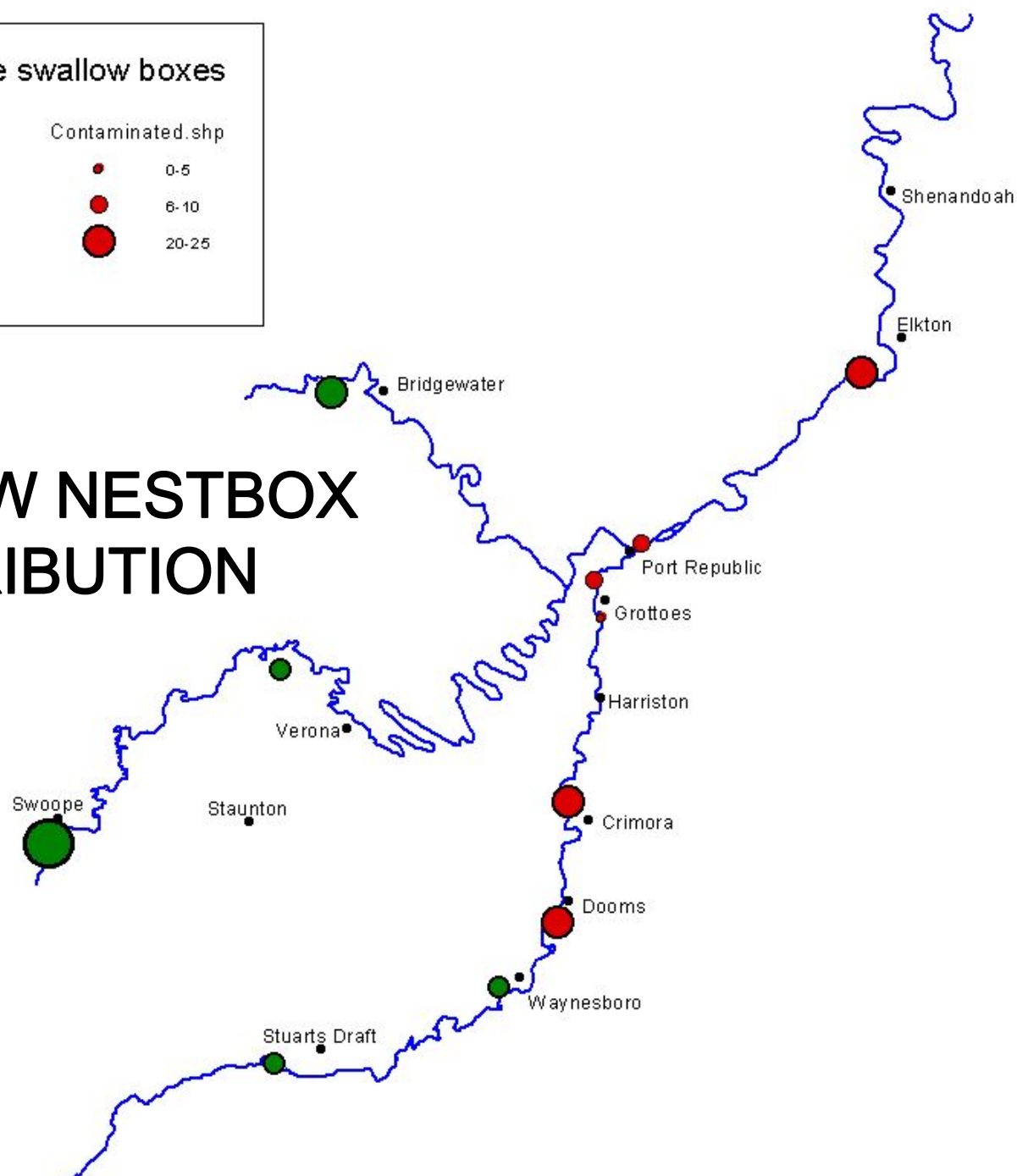
Noncontaminated.shp



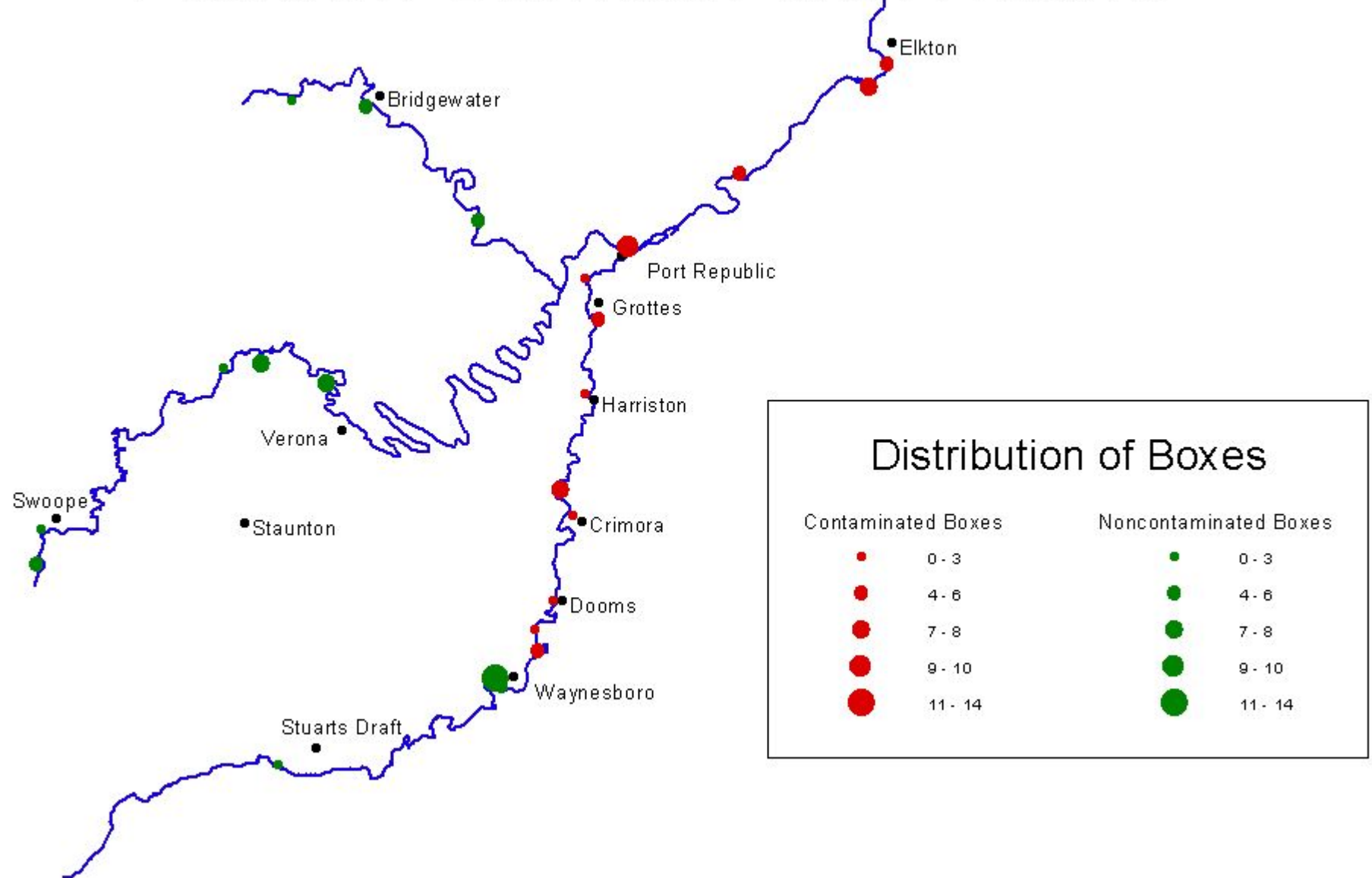
Contaminated.shp



SWALLOW NESTBOX DISTRIBUTION



Eastern Screech-Owl Boxes





**Still planning
to expand
nestbox
coverage
downstream
for 2006**

“To Do” List for Year 1:

~~1. Erect all nestboxes by March 15~~

2. Do point count surveys in May
(Cristol and Ziegenfus)

3. Monitor nests through July
(already started)

4. Collect feathers and blood

Belted Kingfisher:



- Found 6 territories with new or old nests and birds in first 16-mile float (starting at Basic Park), so sampling is feasible
- Networking with locals will be essential to locate them in roadcuts, under bridges or on tributaries
- If we can locate some on reference rivers this month we will sample them this year

Tree swallow:

Lots of swallows roosting in our nestboxes already on both reference and contaminated sites! Nesting should begin soon.



Eastern Screech-owl:

- No nests yet, may have gotten boxes up too late...but...
- Some prospecting owls have left feathers, prey in boxes
- Huge problem with squirrels and starlings, so need more boxes





Still really appreciate
any nest sightings of
kingfishers